

MGF 012-81

6 October 1981

Memorandum for : Director, FBIS
Through : Chief, Operations Group
Subject : Monthly Report--Gulf Bureau--September 1981

I. GENERAL

In view of the fragile political situation in Iran, we have realigned our Persian staffing to provide for a dayshift Persian monitor 5 days weekly. This new staffing arrangement enables us to record the 0230 and 0330 GMT Tehran newscasts for checking when our monitor comes on duty at 0400 GMT. We also cover live the 0430, 0530, 0630 and 1030 GMT newscasts. Since these newscasts are officially the responsibility of the BBC, we confine our processing only to urgent or unique perishable material.

At this delicate time in Iran, this arrangement enables FBIS to know what is in the early morning newscasts up to 3 hours earlier than we would normally know since under the BBC's staffing arrangement the Persian monitor does not report for duty until 0700 GMT. In practise these early morning newscasts normally carry only repeat material from the late evening newscasts of the previous day. However, since these are not normal times in Iran, we are staffing up for the unexpected.

II. EDITORIAL/MONITORIAL

1. In order to provide fuller coverage of Tehran during a period of continuing political uncertainty in Iran, Gulf is now assigning a Persian monitor to dayshifts Saturday-Wednesday, in addition to our usual daily Persian evening staffing. We now have Persian monitors on duty 0430-1900 GMT five days weekly and 1000-1800 GMT the other two days. Following the EOD of another Persian monitor later in the year we will then expand dayshift staffing to seven days weekly.

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2. The dayshift monitor checks recordings and prepares summaries of the Tehran Domestic Service 0230 and 0330 GMT programs and covers live the 0430, 0530, 0630 and 1030 newscasts. At present only urgent material is processed from these newscasts. However, we assist the BBC with other processing when requested. The value of this new arrangement was demonstrated on 30 September when the Bureau processed and filed eight items from the 1030 GMT newscast when poor reception in the United Kingdom precluded the BBC from covering the program.

3. In addition to assisting the BBC with Tehran radio newscasts, the dayshift-Persian monitor also covers live the relays of Majlis proceedings broadcast at 0500 GMT on an FM frequency. Editorial reports on the proceedings, including items on the daily agenda, are processed separately along with occasional leader remarks on important subjects facing Iran today.

4. The Bureau is also covering the Iranian news agency PARS English 1700 GMT transmission daily. Normally PARS transmissions are covered by the BBC, but as in the case of some voice casts, this transmission is currently very poorly received in the UK. We are also backstopping the 0730, 0900 and 1000 GMT PARS transmissions for the BBC.

5. Although Tehran Arabic reported that the name of PARS would be changed to the Islamic Republic of Iran News Agency, the press agency continues to call itself PARS and has not been heard to acknowledge the reported name change.

6. Mashhad Domestic Service in Persian was again heard carrying a local newscast at 1430 GMT and has been added to daily coverage. Broadcasting on 718-722 khz, the radio has not been heard to carry any local programming since March.

7. Cruising of Russian regional radios turned up an Ashkhabad Domestic Service newscast that is audible at Gulf. The newscast, currently carried at 1640 GMT and heard with fair/poor reception, has been added to normal coverage. Material processed to date is low level, but includes economic item of interest to consumers.

8. At the request of NEAAD, the bureau filed two installments of a series on Baluchestan appearing in the Karachi newspaper JASARAT. The series, filed at the request of a headquarters consumer, was to have included a third installment, but this has not yet appeared in the papers received to date.

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9. In agreement with AG and Nicosia Bureau, Gulf has assumed responsibility for Tehran International Service in Russian broadcasts. The broadcasts are covered live with program summaries wirefiled to AG five times a week.



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Bureau Chief